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THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

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IF a Brotherhood or even a number of Brotherhoods may not be able to prevent nations from occasionally cutting each other's throats—still unity in thought and action, and philosophical research into the mysteries of being, will always prevent some, while trying to comprehend that which has hitherto remained to them a riddle, from creating additional causes in a world already so full of woe and evil.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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(*b*) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and

(*c*) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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A U M

The "self" of any subject-matter will be seen to be "infinite" in the sense that any conceived border to the concept is understood to be arbitrary.

—HANS CHRISTIAN SANDBECK

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XLVIII **April, 1960** **No. 6**

THE LOST PROMETHEANS

In apprehension how like a god! —*Hamlet*

A heavy weight of hours has chain'd and bow'd
One too like thee: Tameless, and swift, and proud.

—SHELLEY

WHILE essayists contest lost ground in the battle with Conformity and tired and desperate European philosophers take final stoical stands against the onrushing waves of engulfing irrationalism, the secret heart of mankind waits patiently for an opportunity to be heard. What must find ways to speak is the voice of the Promethean spirit. For centuries this spirit has been suppressed by a demeaning self-contempt and by doctrines of inherent sinfulness. Denied even the shadowed grandeur of the rebellious angel, man has clung to a worm's estate, escaping a predicted damnation only to revel in the narrow cell of his supposed animal ancestry.

His soul no more than a metaphor, his visions poetized into the fancies of romantic song, only his chains have been accounted real, only his weaknesses allowed the dignity of "fact." The gross skills of the makers of monstrous machines have become the type of human excellence, while true genius is put upon bread and water or seduced into the harlotry of the market place.

It is time for egoity to assert itself. It is time for the strength that gave a Homer speech, that made a Whitman into the sounding board for a forgotten past, to burst the shackles of the multiform mediocrity of the age and declare the full extent of human possibility.

What holds man back? Nothing holds him back, save the echo of ancient and modern dogmas. There is that in man which is capable of smashing all sectarianisms like paper toys. There is a being hidden in the human form who has the mastery of worlds locked in his memories. He is the being who rides the chariot of kalpas, who moves in and out of existence by an act of cosmic will, who breaks the silence of universal night and steps out upon the stage of existence, making the heavens part as the sun drives away a mist; who creates and shapes the worlds of life and evolution, who is forever embarking upon fateful enterprises, and who bears upon his shoulders the burdens of past, present, and future.

All the ancient myths of creation are tales told of man. Even the lowliest of humans has a consanguinity of spirit with the highest of self-existent life. The same electric blood flows in his nervous channels of awareness. Behind his brain is banked the same fire of intelligence as that which illuminates suns. He moves at once as a host and as a lonely hero. In him are united the incalculable greatness of both the One and the Many. He is both the private individual and the hierarchy of all the self-aware. He is the living essence which *is,* but does not exist, yet his is also the reflected glory of the world on fire with the ardors of becoming. He is dramatist, actor, and spectator; now magician, now illusion, and now the one bemused and entranced; now the one awakened from a dream. He is all and everything, and captive, finally, of none of his creations. He is the spirit of eternal motion, yet motion filled with import, the general and the particular, the abstract and the concrete.

In him flow together the agony of Judas and the tears of Christ. He knows the pathos of long melancholy hours, the pain of interminable disappointment and frustration, and the meteoric joy of victory. He knows the play of shadows throughout the twilight of human hopes, and also the imageless brilliance of a dissolving past. He stands, immovable, upon the threshold of the unconditioned, looking inward and outward with bisected sight, a living nexus between the finite and the infinite.

What shall we tell the children, and the young? How shall this ancient, secret doctrine be made manifest? What is wanted is an example of genius and daring, a full-scale embodiment of the Age of Pericles and the High Renaissance, played by a dozen or so H.P.B.'s in the

emancipated speech of a new-born culture of the mind. Failing this, we do what we can. There is no need to be ashamed of the impossible novelty of these ancient opinions. They will fail to carry the day only if they are repeated in apologetic accents or by righteous bombast. One cannot honor Theosophy and at the same time honor the crusted swampland of contemporary superstition, with its fading arrogance and its cringing anxieties. The men can be honored, because they are men, but not the mummery of beliefs which keeps them silent when they should speak, and which nerves them to hysterical shouts when they should keep silent.

The present becomes a shrivelled past even before it is born. The age is cracking from pressures which are meant to call out courage and vision, not renewed hysteria about "security." Public figures sound like puppets brought forward from the forums of a hundred years ago. It is, no doubt, the *Kali Yuga;* the times, no doubt, are topsy-turvy; ancient prophecies are confirmed by present disaster and the flight of civilized man from the scene of decision is matched only by the eager barbarism which replaces him. But why should we care? The old will become older, the blind blinder, and the darkness darker. These things are only the unwinding skeins of past decision. They will go on and on, until, unnourished and forgot, they end in a last small tangle of confusion.

Another quickening rhythm belongs to the present and the future. The thin stems of tomorow's harvest quiver with the pulse of flowing life. The old things, the echoing din of medieval battles brought forward on a scratchy time-track to the present—what have the young to do with all this stilted memory of darkened centuries? The present is a time for the new testament of inward perception, for the listening to what the breath of man's being has to say.

Libraries full of sententious utterances marked "reliable knowledge" will be forgotten. Ton after ton of useless printed matter will be dumped to make small mountains of rejected learning. It is a question of the human spirit gaining the courage to listen to its own voice, and from the ensuing sound to find new foundations for self-reliance and further self-discovery. The Theosophical Movement is at the very least the tuning fork for the conscious self-instruction of the men of the future. At the most, it is the matrix of human evolution, the noumenon of history to come.

LEO TOLSTOI AND HIS UNECCLESIASTICAL CHRISTIANITY

TOLSTOI is a great poet, a great artist, a great thinker. All through his life, both heart and mind have been occupied by one burning question, coloring more or less with its painful pressure all his works. We feel its overshadowing presence in the "History of my Childhood," in "War and Peace," in "Anna Karenina," till at last it becomes the exclusive pre-occupation of his later years, which have produced such works as "My Confession," "In what does my Faith Consist?," "What shall we Do?," "Upon Life," and the "Kreutzer Sonata." This same question burns in the hearts of many, especially among Theosophists; it is indeed *the* question of life itself. "What is the meaning, the purpose of human life? What is the final outcome of the unnatural, distorted and falsified life of our civilisation, such as it is forced upon each of us individually? What shall we do to be happy, *permanently* happy? How shall man escape the horror of inevitable death?" To these ever recurring questions, Tolstoi, in his earlier works, gives no answer because he had found none himself. But he could not rest contented, as do millions of others, weaker or more cowardly natures, without an answer, one at least satisfying to his own heart and intellect; and in the five last-named works is contained that answer. An answer, it is true, that will not content the Theosophist *in the form in which Tolstoi gives it,* but an answer in whose basic, vital thought he may find new light, fresh hope, stronger comfort. But to understand it, we must briefly trace the road by which Tolstoi reached the peace he has found; for unless we can *feel,* as well as understand the inner process which led him thither, his solution, like every other solution of life's problem, must remain a dead letter, a merely intellectual word-conception, lacking all vital force and motive power; a mere speculation, not a living truth instinct with enthusiasm.

Like all thinking men and women of to-day, Tolstoi lost faith in religion early in life; for this loss of one's childish faith—inevitable in every

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NOTE.—This article based on an essay by Raphael von Koeber, with an appendix by Dr. Hübbe Schleiden, was first printed in *Lucifer* for September, 1890, and reprinted in THEOSOPHY for July, 1916.

life—is not, as a rule, the result of deep thought; it is rather the natural consequence of our culture and of our general experience of life. As he says himself, his faith vanished, he knew not how. But his youthful striving after ethical perfection survived for some ten years, to die out by degrees, finally disappearing utterly. Seeing everywhere around him ambition, love of power, selfishness and sensuality triumphant; seeing all that is called virtue, goodness, purity, altruism, scorned and flouted, failing to give either inward happiness and content or outward success; Tolstoi went the way of the world, did as he saw others do, practising all the vices and meannesses of the "polite world." Then he turned to literature, became a great poet, a most successful author, seeking ever, he tells us, to hide his own ignorance from himself by teaching others. For some years he succeeded in thus stifling his inner discontent, but ever more frequently, more poignantly, the question forced itself upon him: What am I living for? What do I know? And daily he saw more clearly that he had no answer to give. He was fifty years old when his despair reached its height. At the summit of his fame, a happy husband and father, author of many splendid poems full of the deepest knowledge of men and of the wisdom of life, Tolstoi realized the utter impossibility of going on living. "Man cannot imagine life, without the desire for well-being. To *desire* and attain that well-being—is to *live*. Man probes life only that he may improve it." Our science, on the contrary, investigates only the *shadows* of things, not their realities; and under the delusion that this unimportant secondary is the essential, science distorts the idea of life and forgets her true destiny, which is to fathom *this* very secret, *not* what to-day is discovered and to-morrow is forgotten.

Philosophy tells us: "You are a part of Humanity, therefore you must co-operate in the development of Humanity and in the realising of its ideals; your life's goal coincides with that of all other men." But how does it help me to know that I live for that for which all Humanity lives, when I am *not* told *what it is for which that very Humanity does live?* Why does the world exist? What is the outcome of the fact that it does exist and will exist? Philosophy gives *no* answer.

Scepticism, Nihilism, Despair—thither the thinking man is driven by such thoughts, if he seeks the last word of Wisdom in the Science and Philosophy of the schools. Such, too, is the *real,* inner, mental condition of many an one, both without and within the Theosophical Society.

In regard to this, the problem of life, Tolstoi divides men in general into four classes:

> Some, young and feeble of intellect, live happily in their ignorance —for them the problem of life has, as yet, no existence.
>
> Others know and understand the problem well enough, but turn purposely away from it, favored by fortunate surroundings which permit them to pass their lives as it were in intoxication.
>
> The third group consists of those who know that death is better than a life passed in error and ignorance; but they live on, because they lack the strength to put a sudden end to the fraud—life.
>
> Finally, there are the strong and consistent natures, who grasp the whole stupidity of the farce being played with them, therefore put an end to this silly farce at one stroke.

"I could do nothing," he says, "but think, think of the horrible position I was in. . . . My inner condition at that time, which brought me near to suicide, was such that everything I had hitherto done, everything I could still do, seemed to me foolish and bad. Even what was most precious to me in life, what had so far drawn away my eyes from the cruel reality—my family and my art—even these lost all value for me."

From this depth of despair he escaped at length. "Life is all," he reasoned, "I, my reason itself, are products of this general life. But at the same time Reason is the creator and the final judge of human life *proper.* How then can reason deny to the latter a meaning without denying itself and calling itself senseless? Hence I am only calling life meaningless, because *I* do not grasp its meaning." Convinced that Life *has* a meaning, Tolstoi sought this meaning among those who *really live*—the people. But there he again met disappointment, the bitterest of all, because here lay his last hope. For, among the people, he found only a solution of life's problem resting upon a conception of the universe which is *contrary to reason,* and is based upon that blind faith he had long since cast aside.

"I subjected," he tells us, "the *dicta* of my reason to a fresh examination, and found that Reason did not suffice to answer my questions, because it does not bring into its reasoning the conception of the Infinite (Cause-less, Time-less, Space-less); because it explains my life, passed in Time, Space, and Causality, in terms of Time, Space, and Causality again: thus explaining it indeed with logical correctness, but only in terms of the same components, *i.e.,* leaving its ultimate basis—with which alone we are concerned—unexplained. Religion, on the contrary,

does the exact opposite: she knows no logic, but does know the conception of the Infinite, to which she refers everything, and, to that extent, gives correct answers. Religion says: Thou shall live according to the law of God; the outcome of thy life will be eternal suffering or eternal happiness; the meaning of thy life, which is not annihilated by death, is union with the Infinite Deity. . . . The conception of the Infinite Deity, of the divinity of the Soul, of the relations of human actions to God: these are conceptions, which have been ripened in the hidden infinity of human thought, and without which there would be no life, and I too should not exist.

"But what is God? On what train of thought rests the belief in his existence and in the relation of man to him? If I am," reasoned Tolstoi, "there must be a reason for my being, and a reason for that ground, and an ultimate reason, and this is God. I felt calmed; my uncertainty and the consciousness of standing orphaned in life vanished. But when I asked myself: What is God? How shall I act towards him? I found only *banal* answers that destroyed my faith again. . . . But that I have the conception of God in me, the *fact* and the *necessity* of this conception—of this no one can deprive me. Whence then this conception? Whence its necessity? This necessity is God himself. And I felt glad again. All things around me lived, and had a meaning. The conception of God is not indeed God himself; but the *necessity* of forming this conception, the craving for a knowledge of God, through which knowledge I live —*that* is God, the living and life-giving God. . . . Live in the thought, thou art a manifestation of God, and then thy life will testify to the existence of God."

Tolstoi had regained Faith, "the evidence of things not seen," and his religious faith expressed itself for three years in a life in strict conformity with the most stringent prescriptions of the orthodox Greek Church. But at last, finding the Church and the entire Christian community acting in direct contradiction to his root-conception of true Religion, he broke loose from orthodoxy and set out to determine what is True in Religion for himself from the study of the New Testament.

But before considering the conclusions he reached, let us examine for a moment, from the Theosophical standpoint, Tolstoi's fundamental position. His argument for the existence of an Infinite God as the necessary "ultimate ground" of human reason, is precisely one of the Theosophist's arguments for the existence of Kosmic or Universal

Mind, and, as an argument, it proves nothing more. Influenced by Western habits of feeling, he ascribes to the Universal Mind anthropomorphic attributes which it cannot possess, thus sowing the seeds of the strained and forced conclusions as to practical action which he subsequently arrives at. Fundamentally he is right; but in the effort to satisfy the demands of his emotional nature he falls into a quasi-anthropomorphism. For us, however, more importance attaches to the poignant picture he presents of the mental misery that tortures every honest thinker to-day, and to his pointing out of the road, the only road, by which an escape is possible. For starting from his basis we are led, if we reason carefully and closely, to the basic conclusions of Theosophical teaching, as will be seen later.

To return to Tolstoi's religious unfoldment. Studying the Gospels, he came to find the kernel, the essence of Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, understood in its literal, simple sense, "even as a little child would understand it." He considers as the perfect expression of Christ's law of Charity and Peace, the command, "Resist not evil," which to him is the most perfect rendering of *true* Christianity, and this command he describes as "the sole and eternal law of God and of men." He also points out that long before the appearance of the historical Jesus, this law was known and recognized by all the leaders and benefactors of the human race. "The progress of mankind towards good," he writes, "is brought about by those who suffer, *not* by those who inflict, martyrdom."

Such is the essence of Tolstoi's religion; but we shall be better able to enter into its real meaning and appreciate his practical deductions therefrom, after having examined, first, his doctrine of religious bliss, and second, his philosophy of life.

I believe, says Tolstoi: (1) that happiness on earth depends solely upon the fulfilling of Christ's teaching; (2) that its fulfilment is not only possible, but easy and full of joy. Happiness, he teaches, is love towards all men, union with them, and evil is the breach of this unity. Love and unity are the natural condition of men, in which all men find themselves who are not led astray by false teachings.

These conceptions changed his whole view of life; all he had before striven for, all that counts for so much in the world, honor, fame, culture, riches, increased refinement of life, of surroundings, of food, of clothing, of manners—all this lost its value in his eyes, and in place of

them he came to esteem what the *World* calls bad and low, simplicity, poverty, want of culture. But the real essence of his teaching lies in the conception of the Universal Brotherhood of mankind.

For Tolstoi, *Life* means the striving of man after well being, after happiness, a happiness only to be attained, as we have seen, through the fulfilment of the commands of Jesus. Of these commands the deepest meaning is: true life, therefore also true happiness, consists—not in the preservation of one's personality, but—in absorption into the All, into God and Humanity. Since God is Reason, the Christian teaching may be formulated thus: subordinate thy personal life to reason, which demands of thee unconditional love for all beings.[1]

The personal life, that which recognises and wills only one's own "I," is the animal life; the life of reason is the human, the existence proper to man according to his nature as man. The crowning maxim of Stoic ethics: live according to nature, according to thy *human* nature, expresses the same thing. The teachings of the wisest law-givers: the Brahmans, Gautama Buddha, Confucius, Lao-Tze, Moses, all contain the same explanation of life, make the same demand upon the man. For, from the remotest times onwards, Humanity has even been conscious of the torturing inner contradiction, wherein all who seek after personal well-being find themselves. As, unfortunately, there is no other solution of this contradiction except to transfer the centre of attraction of one's existence[2] *from* the personality, which can never be saved from destruction, *to* the everlasting All, it is intelligible that all the sages of the past, and with them also the greatest thinkers of later centuries, have established doctrines and moral laws identical in their general meaning because they saw more clearly than other men both this contradiction and its solution.

It is not difficult to see wherein consists the basic contradiction of personal life. That which for man is the most important, that alone which he desires, that which—as it seems to him—alone really *lives,* namely his personality, is destroyed, becomes a skeleton, decays, does *not* remain "himself;" while that which he does *not* desire, which has no value for him, the life and welfare of which he does *not* feel, the whole outside world of struggling beings, that proves itself to be that which endures, which truly lives.

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[1] Absolutely the same doctrine as that taught by Buddha and all other Initiates, Plato included. A fact recognised by Tolstoi, though not given its due significance by him.

[2] Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.

With the awakening of the reasoning consciousness, which must occur sooner or later in every man, he becomes conscious of the gulf between the animal and the human life; he realises this more and more fully, till at last—on the highest plane of consciousness—the fundamental contradiction of life is recognised as only an *apparent* contradiction, pertaining solely to the sphere of animal existence, and the meaning of life, after which the personal man seeks in vain, is at last discovered. It is not discovered by logical deduction, but intuitively. The spiritually awakened or regenerated man suddenly finds himself transported into the eternal, timeless condition of the life of pure "Reason,"[3] in which can be no more illusions, contradictions, riddles. . . . The life of reason is, as the original and only true life, also the *normal* life of man: and man as such can only be called "living" in so far as he subdues the animal in him under the law of Reason; precisely as the animal only *really lives* when it obeys, not only the laws of the matter which composes it, but also the higher law of organic life. . . . When once it has been recognised that, in specifically human life, the primacy naturally belongs not to the personality, but to the Reason, there is nothing superhuman in following the *natural* law of human life and both regarding and using as a *tool* what *is* a mere tool of the true life—the personality. . . . But it may be asked: Why then do we have a personality if we are to renounce it, deny it? In order that the personality, like any tool, may serve *merely* as a means to an end—other answer there is none. The personality is nothing but the "spade," that is given to the reasoning being to be dug with, to be blunted in that digging and then sharpened again, to be used up, but not to be cleaned and stored away. To *use* a tool as a tool is not to *deny* it, but simply to make it serve its proper purpose, *i.e.*, Reason.

This is Tolstoi's philosophy of life, identical in its basis with that of Theosophy. But lacking the universality of the latter, leaning too exclusively upon the corrupted and fragmentary dicta of but one Teacher of Wisdom, Tolstoi's philosophy fails to guide him in practice and, as a study of his work shows, lands him eventually in self-contradiction. This self-contradiction, however, being but of the surface, of the physical plane only, is of relatively small importance, contrasted with the real escape he has made beyond the delusions in which most of us live.

Want of space renders it impossible to follow out into further detail

[3] Meaning Plato's "Noetic Life."

the comparison between Tolstoi's views and those of Theosophy. Every reader of *Lucifer* can readily do so for himself, and we will only add that Dr. Von Koeber's essay, which has supplied the material for the above sketch, and of which it is mainly a summary, is worthy the careful study of every one who can read German. Of the Appendix, which Dr. Hübbe Schleiden has tacked on thereto, it must be said to show a want of appreciation and understanding of the true spirit and meaning of Tolstoi's thought and action, which seems to indicate the same misconception of the nature of *real* "mysticism," that may be noticed in the same writer's other essays.

The Art of the People

Artistic intuition is a universal gift, but very few are encouraged to use it. The conception of the universality of the human gift of expression is the basis of modern teaching in all the arts. Art should be a social function, a collective popular expression. In proportion as it becomes a part of everyday life, the concern of everybody, it grows in meaning and power. In China, in Greece, in Egypt, and other countries where there has been a vast underswell of popular art, we find the most profound expression of a genuine national culture. This culture consists of numberless elements brought together and fused by the fire of national consciousness; without this consciousness, art loses its national character, or, rather, fails to develop one, and remains untempered and lifeless. . . .

The conditions are ripening for the creation of a distinctly American art, something fresh and unique that will come to life out of all this mass of traditional tendencies and new materials diverted into new fields. The foundations of all new cultures are borrowed, usually from the nearest neighbor, and because America was discovered at the beginning of an era of world travel and easy communication between widely separated countries, her borrowings have been free and varied beyond all precedent. This makes a complex problem and many apparently irreconcilable elements must yet be reconciled. A remarkably generous, broad and plastic culture is promised from all this, for already there is a pattern discernable on the surface.

—Best-Maugard

APOLLONIUS AND THE MAHATMAS

THE journey to India made by the great adept, Apollonius of Tyana, has a special interest for us modern students of occultism. The story of this journey, related in the life of Apollonius by Philostratus, has been held by many to be a fable, and Mr. Tredwell, in his laudable work, omits any account of it. To an earnest Theosophist, however, the internal evidence of the narration is too strong to be resisted, although it is told at third hand probably with the adornments which an accomplished Greek author thought needful for the requisite grace of style.

Apollonius may perhaps be said to have been the Master whose mission was to set the temples in order for the departure of the glorious classic era. Born in the same century as Jesus of Nazareth, nowhere did the teachings of the two, so far as it appears, come into open contact, although the fame of the former spread far and wide in Europe, Asia and Africa during his lifetime. It is said, however, that although no creed bears his name, his work in the world was nevertheless immense and his teachings have, in many unperceived ways, influenced millions of human beings down to the present day.

Apollonius was still a young man when he went to India, but even then he was famous for his wisdom. He had been sent, as a boy of fourteen years, to school in Tarsus by his wealthy father, but he did not like the ways of that city and he was allowed to remove to Aegæ, also in Sicily, where he studied the great philosophers and was specially drawn to teachings of Pythagoras. At the age of sixteen he fully adopted the Pythagorean life and held firmly to it ever after, letting his hair grow long, eating no flesh, and drinking no wine, wearing no clothing made of animal products. He took up his abode in the temple of Asclepius, and thousands were attracted thither by the wisdom of the wonderfully beautiful youth. Grown to manhood, he made a vow of silence and spoke not a word for five years. Then for a time he taught in Antioch. When asked how the wise man should treat questions of learning, he replied: "Like the law-giver. For the law-giver must make that, of whose truth he has convinced himself, into commandments for the multitude."

NOTE.—This article was first printed in two parts in Mr. Judge's *Path* magazine for October and December, 1886, and was last reprinted in THEOSOPHY for December, 1944.

He now conceived the idea of a journey to India to meet the wise men known as Brahmans and Hyrkanians. He afterwards told the Egyptian Gymnosophists that his thoughts were directed to them in his youth, but his teacher pointed out to him that in India lived the men who stood nearest the source of wisdom, and from whom the Egyptians themselves derived their light.

His seven disciples in Antioch had not the courage to undertake the journey with him, and he departed with two of his family servants, "one for writing rapidly and the other finely," according to Philostratus. At Ninus he was joined by Damis the Ninivite. The young Assyrian was thenceforth his devoted disciple, accompanying him on all his many journeys throughout his long career. It is to Damis that we chiefly owe the detailed accounts of the doings of the Master thenceforward. We are thereby enabled to see Apollonius in his daily life; in his various deeds and actions, his familiar sayings recorded as he talks with his faithful companion about the common sights and occurrences around them. The picture is therefore exceptionally intimate, and the man himself is brought near to us as well as his divine teachings. When Damis was reproached for writing down such trifles about his master, and compared with a dog devouring the crumbs from a table, he replied: "When the gods are feasting they doubtless have servants who take care that no crumbs of ambrosia are lost."

A year and eight months were spent in Babylon, where King Bardanus, who was a friend of wisdom, received Apollonius with great honors. Considerable intercourse was had with the Magi; he learnt something of them and also taught them something. Damis was forbidden to accompany him in his visits to them, but he said that Apollonius visited them at noon and at midnight. Once Damis asked "What are the Magi?" and was answered, "They are indeed wise, but not in everything." The King became ill, and Apollonius spoke so much and so divinely about the soul that the monarch said to those around: "Apollonius not only relieves me of concern for the Kingdom, but also for Death."

Apollonius, in departing, refused all gifts, but the King provided him with camels and all things needful for the journey. When the King asked what he would bring him from India he replied, "A joyful gift, O King! For if intercourse with the men there makes me wiser, I shall come back to thee better than I now am."

Upon this the King embraced him and said: "May'st thou but come; for this gift is great."

They crossed what they called the Caucasus mountains, separating India and Medea. May it not be that from this ancient designation we get the name of the Caucasian race, rather than from what is now known as the Caucasus? This would make the place of origin identical with that commonly ascribed to the Aryans.

Crossing the Indus they soon came to Taxila, which they called the capital of India. It is difficult to trace out their exact course, the present names of most geographical features being quite different from the designations given by Damis. It would probably require a thorough Occultist to tell just what places they did visit. King Phraotes was the ruler at Taxila, and in him Apollonius found an initiate. The latter was struck with the modest simplicity of the monarch's surroundings on entering the palace, and inferred that he must be a philosopher. The King told Apollonius the course which a youth took who proposed to dedicate himself to the pursuit of Wisdom. When he had reached his 18th year he had to cross the Hyphasis river to those men who had attracted Apollonius to India. Beforehand, however, he had to make his intention publicly known, in order that he might be restrained in case he was not pure. To be pure one had to be without blemish in respect to father and mother, and moreover with an upright ancestry for three generations. If without fault in this respect the youth himself was then examined as to whether he had a good memory, whether he was naturally inclined to uprightness or would only have it appear so, whether given to drink or gluttony, of boastful habits, evil or foolish ways, whether obedient to father, mother and instructors, and finally if he had made no evil use of the bloom of his youth. "Since wisdom stands in great esteem here," said the King, "and is honored by the Indians, it is of great moment that those who seek to devote themselves unto it should be carefully examined and made to undergo thousand-fold tests."

When Apollonius asked about the wise men whom Alexander the Great was said to have conquered and then held converse with, Phraotes said that they were the Oxydraks, a war-like people who claimed Wisdom though they knew nothing of consequence; the truly wise men dwelt between the Hyphasis and Ganges. Had Alexander gone thither he could not have conquered them, even with ten thousand Achilles and thirty thousand Ajaxes. "For they fight not in battle against advancing

enemies, but being holy men, beloved by God, they repulse them through aerial apparitions, and lightning flashes."

When Apollonius took his departure Phraotes gave him the following significant letter to the Brahmins:

"The King Phraotes greets his teacher Iarchas and the Wise men with him. Apollonius, the wisest of men, regards you as wiser than himself, and comes to learn from you. Let him not depart without knowledge of all which you yourselves know. For thus nothing of your wisdom will be lost; since no one speaks better than he, or has a truer memory. Let him also behold the throne whereon I sat when thou, Father Iarchas, gavest me my Kingdom. His attendants also deserve praise for their attachment to such a man. Be thou happy. Be happy all of you."

When they came near the hill where the wise men dwelt their guide was filled with fear, for the Indians stood more in awe of these men than of their own King, and the King who ruled the land where they lived was accustomed to consult them about everything he said or did.

When near a village not a stadium from the hill, a youth approached them, blacker than any Indian, with a gleaming moon-shaped mark between his eyebrows. He bore a golden anchor, which in India took the place of the Herald's staff. He addressed Apollonius in Greek, which did not astonish him, since all the dwellers in the village [a lamasary?] spoke that tongue, but it did astonish the others to hear their master called by name; Apollonius, however, it filled with confidence as he remembered the purpose of his journey. "We have come to men truly wise," he said to Damis, "for they have a fore-knowledge of things." Asking the youth what was to be done, he was told: "Those with you remain *here*; thou, however, shalt come just as thou art, for so *They* command." In this *They* Apollonius recognized Pythagorean language and he followed with joy.

In one of his conversations with the Egyptian Gymnosophists, years afterwards, Apollonius thus characterized the wise men of India: "I saw the Indian Brahmins who dwell upon the earth and not upon the earth; in a strong fortress though unfortified; and, without possessions, possessing everything." The deep, interior significance of this is evident to a Theosophist. Damis, in the matter-of-fact way often customary with him, also gives these words a literal interpretation, saying that they had their bed upon the earth and strewed the ground with herbs

selected by themselves; he himself had seen them floating in the air two ells above the earth; not for hocus pocus—for they despised vain striving—but in order, by thus floating with the sun, to be near and pleasing unto the god. This was what was meant by "upon the earth and not upon the earth." The strong fortress, unfortified, meant the air in which they dwelt, for although they appeared to live under the open heaven, they spread a shadow over themselves, were not wet by the rain, and were in the sunshine whenever they wished. And since they obtained everything the moment they wished it, Apollonius rightly said that they possessed what they did not possess. "They wear their hair very long, they bind a white mitra around their heads, their feet are bare. The form of their clothing resembles that of a sleeveless under-garment; the material is a wool produced by the earth of itself, white like the Pamphylian, but softer, and so fat that oil flows from it. Of this they make their sacred garments, and when another than these men seeks to gather this wool the earth will not release it. By the power of the ring and the staff which they bear every thing can be done, but both are kept as a secret." This personal description by Damis corresponds in certain particulars with what we are told of the Masters to-day. The account of the wool leads some commentators to believe that asbestos is meant.

Iarchas welcomed Apollonius in Greek and asked him for the letter from Phraotes; when Apollonius wondered at his gift of prescience he remarked that a *delta* was lacking in the letter, left out by mistake, and so it proved. After reading the letter Iarchus asked: "What dost thou think of us?"

And Apollonius replied: "As no other person in the land whence I came, as my journey hither shows."

"What makest thou think that we know more than thou dost?"

"I believe," answered Apollonius, "that your knowledge is deeper and much more divine."

Iarchas hereupon said: "Others are accustomed to ask the new comer whence he comes and for what purpose; the first sign of our wisdom shall be this: that the stranger is not unknown to us. So then, test this:"

Hereupon he told Apollonius his history from father and mother down, what he had done in Aegæ, how Damis had come to him, what things of importance had happened on the way, etc. As Apollonius asked in surprise whence came that knowledge, Iarchas answered: "Thou also camest gifted with this wisdom, but not yet with all of it."

"And wilt thou teach me all thy wisdom?" asked Apollonius.

"By all means, and in ungrudging abundance, for this is wiser than miserly to conceal that which is worthy of knowing. Besides, Apollonius, I see thou hast been richly gifted by Mnemosyne, and she is the one among the gods whom we most love."

"Dost thou also behold," asked Apollonius, "of what manner my nature is?"

"We see all peculiarities of the soul, for we know them by thousandfold indications," replied Iarchas.

When mid-day came they rose in the air and did homage to the sun. The youth who bore the anchor was then told to go and provide for the companions of Apollonius. Swifter than the swiftest of birds he went and returned, saying: "I have provided for them." He was then commanded to bring the throne of Phraotes, and when Apollonius had seated himself thereon they continued their conversation. Iarchas told him to ask what he wished, for he had come to men who knew all things. Apollonius asked if they knew themselves, for he believed that they, like the Greeks, held knowledge of self to be difficult. But Iarchas answered with an unexpected turning; "We know all things, because first of all we know ourselves; for no one of us can approach this wisdom without first attaining knowledge of self."

Apollonius asked further, what they held themselves to be?

"Gods," answered Iarchas.

"And wherefore?"

"Because we are good men."

Apollonius found so much wisdom in this saying that he made use of it in his speech of defence before the Emperor Domitian.

They talked about the soul and reincarnation, and Iarchas told him that the truth was "as Pythagoras taught you, and as we taught the Egyptians." They spoke about the previous incarnation of Apollonius as steersman of an Egyptian ship, in which capacity he had refrained from following the inducements held out by pirates to let his vessel come into their hands.

Concerning this Iarchas said that refraining from unrighteousness did not constitute righteousness.

The King came to visit the Brahmins and a wonderful feast was prepared for him; everything came of itself; Pythian tripods, and automatic

attendants of black bronze, the earth spread out herbs softer than beds to recline on, delicate viands appeared in orderly succession, etc. The accounts of these phenomena occasioned great remark during the subsequent career of Apollonius, and people would persist in mixing them up with the teachings of the master just as to-day they inextricably confound Madame Blavatsky's famous cup and saucer with Theosophy. But we are told that Apollonius did not concern himself with phenomena; when he saw these wonderful things he did not ask how they were done, nor to be taught to do them, but he contented himself with admiring them. And we are also told that the marvelous things he did were not accomplished through ceremonial magic, but through the perfection of his wisdom.

Damis was subsequently allowed to come to the Brahmins and when he asked about the composition of the world and the four elements they replied that there were five—the fifth being ether, which was to be regarded as the primal source of the gods.

"For everything that breathes the air is mortal; that which drinks the ether is immortal and divine," said Iarchas. He also said that the world was to be regarded as a living being of both sexes, having a more ardent love for itself than that of one person to another, being united and bound to itself. Damis learnt much from his intercourse with the Brahmins, but he wrote that at the secret discourses Apollonius was alone with Iarchas, and from there originated the four books written by the former. Iarchas, said Damis, gave Apollonius seven rings bearing the names of the seven planets, and Apollonius wore them one after the other according to the name of the day of the week.

The foregoing is an incomplete account of the remarkable journey and experience of Apollonius, as is necessitated by the limits of a brief article. Many passages of deep wisdom have had to be passed over, and many remarkable things are told, hard to understand, but which, there is reason to believe, have an occult significance. S.B.

CONTINUITY—AND THE CYCLES OF TIME

IT is the nature of the human mind to seek assurance that the power which it represents, as a unique individuality, will be extended in time. Even the nineteenth-century "Darwinists," proud of their liberation from a theological immortality, were not above expressing enthusiasm concerning the improvement of the species. They sometimes said, "We shall be a part of that future in one sense; the characteristics we develop, physically and mentally, will live on in our children and our children's children." This may be an emasculated version of human immortality, since it is precisely the *individual* mind which represents the principle of continuity, yet there is no doubt that the Darwinian imagination, like the theological imagination, could no more do without some kind of continuity than it could do without the hope of social progress.

The "continuity" elaborated by traditional theology was also emasculated, though its weaknesses are less obvious for one who longs to believe that the "soul" will outlive the body. According to the Christian story, the soul, once created by God, will live forever, retaining personal consciousness either in Heaven or in Hell. But the obvious question becomes, "What kind of consciousness?" since in neither locality would there be perception of contrast between good and evil, nor choices between alternatives such as test and improve the qualities of soul during life on earth.

If we ask ourselves questions concerning the psychological origins of the longing for continuity, some significant considerations suggest themselves: For one thing, a mind bent on self-improvement asks nothing more—and nothing less—than an opportunity to make better choices than those now seen to be inadequate or mistaken. What we really want is for the cycle of circumstances to come around again, so that *we* may "come around" to meet it with greater ability, greater steadiness of purpose, less of disregard for meaning, and less of blind selfishness. For neither the believer in mere biological continuity nor the traditional Christian is there any hope that the same or comparable circumstances will obtain after the life of the body is over—with the mind, *our* mind, also present to deal with them more significantly than we have done before.

Fortunately, there are numerous signs that future generations will perceive that the longing for continuity of mind is in no way dependent upon either Christian or Darwinian premises—that it antedates both, and may be taken as an essential element of the *nature* of the human mind. Hans Christian Sandbeck in *Nature and Destiny* (University of Oslo Press), concludes his provocative volume with these paragraphs:

> Destiny, as an unvarying principle characterizing the procedure of nature in general, and of human beings in particular, is expressible by the word *Self-continuation—comprising the preservation of an identity within an ever-changing self, and the infinite expansion of such individual identity—particularly the individual consciousness.*
>
> Experiences (things, events, attitudes) which commonly are characterized as "good," "ethical," "valuable," "beautiful," are *evidently* in accord with both the polary complements of this teleological principle.

"Self-continuation," in terms of a purpose understandable to the ego, means the repetition of opportunities for learning, and a perception of this fact establishes the relationship between cyclic law and the psychological requirements of the human soul. If Self-continuation were only possible as a projection into discontinuous, non-repetitive environments and circumstances, there would be no opportunity for growth or refinement of perception—the elevation of the ego's state of consciousness. It is the ego's perception of a *passage through recurring cycles* which establishes identity in terms of a unique individuality.

In her commentary on the Stanzas of *Dzyan* in Book I of *The Secret Doctrine,* H. P. Blavatsky endeavors to show that the ancients, in their esoteric tradition, ever sought a vision of the vast cosmic cycles—an over-arching view which would increase insight into the purpose of cycles of learning through which they, as human souls, must pass. The beginning of such reflection begins transcendence of the personal predicament; one senses the unfolding of an entire universe from a state of non-manifestation into new life.

Each new Manvantaric period brings a recapitulation of the final stages of evolution in a previous great cycle. During that recapitulation, the forms of consciousness identified with the former Manvantara also become involved in new patterns of interaction, giving a unique character in the Manvantara just beginning. Thus the "fall" into the confusions of experience is necessary involvement, confusions to be resolved in the coming cyclic path upward, to ever-higher states of consciousness.

In his *Hero With a Thousand Faces,* Joseph Campbell describes this process in a passage which seems remarkably intuitive:

> The lapse of superconsciousness into the state of unconsciousness is precisely the meaning of the Biblical image of the Fall. The constriction of consciousness, to which we owe the fact that we see not the source of the universal power but only the phenomenal forms reflected from that power, turns superconsciousness into unconsciousness and, at the same instant and by the same token, creates the world. Redemption consists in the return to superconsciousness and therewith the dissolution of the world. This is the great theme and formula of the cosmogonic cycle, the mythical image of the world's coming to manifestation and subsequent return into the nonmanifest condition. Equally, the birth, life, and death of the individual may be regarded as a descent into unconsciousness and return. The hero is the one who, while still alive, knows and represents the claims of the superconsciousness which throughout creation is more or less unconscious. The adventure of the hero represents the moment when he achieved illumination—the nuclear moment when, while still alive, he found and opened the road to the light beyond the dark walls of our living death.
>
> And so it is that the cosmic symbols are presented in a spirit of thought-bewildering sublime paradox. . . . The modern student may, of course, study these symbols as he will, either as a symptom of others' ignorance, or as a sign to him of his own, either in terms of a reduction of metaphysics to psychology, or vice versa. The traditional way was to meditate on the symbols in both senses. In any case, they are telling metaphors of the destiny of man, man's hope, man's faith, and man's dark mystery.

Book I of *The Secret Doctrine* is particularly concerned with the "hero" as Teacher. Interpreting the symbolism of the Stanzas, H.P.B. comments on Stanza VII:

> The Dhyani Buddhas, namely the "Watchers" or "Architects," finished their cycle on Earth and other worlds, in the preceding Rounds. In the future manvantaras they will have risen to higher systems than our planetary world; and it is the Elect of our Humanity, the Pioneers on the hard and difficult path of Progress, who will take the places of their predecessors. The next great Manvantara will witness the men of our own life-cycle becoming the instructors and guides of a mankind whose Monads may now yet be imprisoned—semi-conscious —in the most intellectual of the animal kingdom, while their lower principles will be animating, perhaps, the highest specimens of the Vegetable world.
>
> Thus proceed the cycles of the septenary evolution, in Septennial nature; the Spiritual or divine; the psychic or semi-divine; the intel-

> lectual, the passional, the instinctual, or *cognitional;* the semi-corporeal and the purely material or physical natures. All these evolve and progress cyclically, passing from one into another, in a double, centrifugal and centripetal way.

In her recapitulation of Book I, H.P.B. extends the occult significance of the philosophical perspective suggested by Joseph Campbell:

> The Universe is worked and *guided* from *within outwards.* As above so it is below, as in heaven so on earth; and man—the microcosm and miniature copy of the macrocosm—is the living witness to this Universal Law and to the mode of its action. We see that every *external* motion, act, gesture, whether voluntary or mechanical, organic or mental, is produced and preceded by *internal* feeling or emotion, will or volition, and thought or mind. As no outward motion or change, when normal, in man's external body can take place unless provoked by an inward impulse, given through one of the three functions named, so with the external or manifested Universe. The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled, and animated by almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform and who—whether we give to them one name or another, and call them Dhyan-Chohans or Angels—are "messengers" in the sense only that they are the agents of Karmic and Cosmic Laws. They vary infinitely in their respective degrees of consciousness and intelligence; and to call them all pure Spirits without any of the earthly alloy "which time is wont to prey upon" is only to indulge in poetical fancy. For each of these Beings either *was,* or prepares to become, a man, if not in the present, then in a past or a coming cycle (Manvantara).

The passage of the human soul through various "cycles of destiny" occupies the attention of every inspiring myth and religious doctrine. Each "cycle" represents a particular segment of duration, providing unique opportunities for resolution of certain conflicts and the extension of the purview of the soul. The same ingredients of opportunity will return again and again to the potential "hero," who must learn to cross various thresholds of psychological initiation. He may *decline* to participate in the self-initiatory process, or he may stand, as Arjuna finally resolves to stand, in an effort to fight out the needful battle. Indeed, the cycle will come again, no failure is permanent, yet while the essential ingredients which the cycle represents will return, its exact counterpart can never be duplicated. From this standpoint, the Theosophical student may see that while there is "all the time in the cosmos," there is also, quite literally, "no time like the present."

Finally, one recognizes the genuine "hero" as one who grasps the

import of each moment as it arrives, and therefore, in his responses to cyclic opportunity, becomes "one with the law."

All these considerations may serve as a background for deeper appreciation of the few words with which H. P. Blavatsky both introduces and summarizes the Second Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*: "The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically 'the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing'."

The Wide World

Viewed from the bodily angle, no comparisons can express the insignificance of man among the cosmic magnitudes upon which our astronomers exhaust their eloquence. Theirs is a terrifying artillery. Under the bombardment of their dimensions and distances the spirit shrivels. We are afraid, and the marrow of our bones is dried up. With time and space as their allies they diminish us to pitiable atomies. . . . The world includes this trifling object, man, as it includes the primrose and the cloud. Yet, by a curious paradox, in its comprehension this puny object goes beyond and includes the world within which it is found. Man is at once contained within, and himself contains the world in his thought. Thus, if his outer and physical vision minimises his importance, his inner and intellectual restores and enhances his estate. . . .

By most philosophers it is agreed that over against the thinker there certainly exists a universe not of his making, a world "common to all," as Kant expressed it. To its true character, nevertheless, no one has found the way. Some link there is between them. We cannot believe that the observer and the world encountered each other by accident one fine day in the vasty fields of space. But how are they connected? All we can say is, no observer without a world, and yet no world without an observer. Or again, in Kantian language, perception without conception is blind, conception without perception empty. We can come to no other conclusion than that the marriage of things and thought is indissoluble.

—W. Macneile Dixon

THE NATURE OF FORM

IV

The Electro-Dynamic Theory of Life

PERHAPS the most interesting of all electric field investigations to date has come from Yale University, through the work of Drs. H. S. Burr and F. S. C. Northrup and their associates. A number of reports of their work have been published; some of the less specialized ones will be used here to summarize the work.

A good measuring instrument was developed by Dr. Burr and his associates, Drs. C. T. Lane and L. F. Nims, known as a "vacuum-tube microvoltmeter," which was used with special electrodes to measure potentials on the surface of living organisms. Great care was taken to exclude errors in measuring with this sensitive instrument. The instrument was described in 1936 in the *Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine* and later in 1944 in an article by Dr. Burr, entitled "Potential Gradients in Living Systems and Their Measurements," in *Medical Physics.*

Drs. Burr and Northrup acknowledged the work of E. J. Lund and praised his meticulous measurements. They also made measurements, some of which were presented in a paper before the National Academy of Sciences in April 1939, entitled "Evidence for the Existence of an Electro-Dynamic Field In Living Organisms":

> Studies of the past five years have shown that in many vertebrates, as well as in plants and invertebrates, there is a relatively steady state voltage difference between any two points. These gradients are remarkably stable, are of considerable magnitude and are changed only by alterations in the fundamental biology of the organism. Moreover, in all the forms studied, the gradients are not chaotic but exist in a well-defined pattern which is characteristic of the species to which the animal belongs and is, to some extent, characteristic of the individual. In general, it may be said that growth and development, local injuries, the menstrual cycle and ovulation in the female, and the incidence of cancer profoundly affect voltage differences in what seems to be a unique manner.

More details are given in an article in *Growth* for April 1937, "Experimental Findings Concerning the Electro-Dynamic Theory of Life and an Analysis of Their Physical Meaning," by Drs. Northrup and

Burr.[1] Besides presenting experimental findings, some choice comments are made:

> It would appear, therefore, that the experimental demonstration of the existence of an electrical field in living organisms necessitates the acceptance of the organic electrical field character of the organism as in part an irreducible and determining factor and not as a mere by-product of the motion and redistribution of the chemical atoms. . . .
>
> Earlier work emphasized merely that certain local physiological processes exhibit electrical phenomena under certain circumstances. As long as this was the case, it was natural to regard the electrical as secondary to the chemical since only the chemical appeared everywhere in space and continuously in time in the organism. But now that we find the electrical factor to be a steady-state field existing continuously in space throughout the whole of the organism and persisting continuously in time . . . . the conception of the electrical properties of living things as a secondary factor becomes less easy to maintain. The electrical field is as universally present in every process and region and stage of development of the organism as the discrete atomic chemical constituents. . . .
>
> The basic thesis of the electro-dynamic theory of life that living systems are complex electro-dynamic fields in part determined by their atomic constituents and in part determined by an irreducible relational factor in the field itself seems to have been confirmed by Burr's potential readings and by Gibb's, Harned's, Taylor's and Guggenheim's analyses of the physical meaning of such potential readings. [References are given at the end of this article to the contributions of the last-named individuals.]

The paper in *Growth* is a follow-up of an earlier article by the same authors called "The Electro-Dynamic Theory of Life" published in *The Quarterly Review of Biology* for September 1935. It answers the questions raised by the earlier article as to the universal existence of the field in living organisms, the effects of introduced fields, and significance of the fields. The 1935 article gives historical background on various concepts of Greek, medieval, and modern philosophers and scientists relating to the so-called "life sciences." Then some unifying suggestions are made:

> To make sense out of the notion that the field determines the behavior of any local process or constituent within it, it is necessary to modify modern science at its very foundations by revising our theory

[1] Other aspects of Dr. Burr's and Dr. Northrup's work have been discussed in THEOSOPHY 27:514; 28:394; 29:358; 32:185.

> of first principles to provide meaning for the unity of nature as a causal factor. Without this revision in our most elemental and fundamental conception of nature . . . all field theories whether in physiology or physics are mere verbiage.

The macroscopic atomic concept of Dr. Northrup is then presented as a basis for unity, followed by the remark that "Thus a unity of nature as a whole is impressed upon the compounding and aggregating of the microscopic particles to make complex nature one as well as many, a unity as well as an aggregate, a field which in part determines the behavior of each particle and process. . . ." Many arguments are advanced for the existence of a macroscopic atom, whose field forms the basis for the underlying unity of life. Modern physics has shown "the field as well as the particle . . . as a causal factor." Then the problem of organization is considered:

> The significance of this for biology can be made evident by a brief consideration of its most fundamental and perplexing problem—the problem of organization. It is a commonplace that living creatures, notwithstanding the modification in types in evolution, maintain a certain constancy of structure throughout continuous changes of material. . . . The traditional modern doctrine that the chemical elements completely condition the structure and organization of the organism failed to explain why a certain structural constancy persisted through the chemical flux.
>
> This obvious inadequacy led to the introduction of non-physical factors such as Driesch's "entelechy," Spemann's "organizer," Rignano's "biological energy," Child's "psychological gradient," Weiss's "biological field," and Köhler's "Gestalten," all of which have certain validity as descriptive terms.

The problem of growth is then discussed, and a good case for the existence of the astral body is gradually built up—although the authors deny the necessity of postulating the existence of "an extra-biological agent incapable of scientific description."

> In spite of the mass of accumulated data concerning the development of the organism in general and of the nervous system in particular, no thoroughly satisfactory explanation has been given of the regulation and control of growth. . . . Growing systems possess an extraordinary capacity for self-regulation. Some powerful agent seems to be inherent in the system through which the progress of development from stage to stage is coördinated and regulated according to a definite plan. Each and every biological system seems to possess a dynamic "wholeness," the maintenance of whose integrity is a necessity of continued organic

existence. Virtually all the theoretical analyses stress this quality but no adequate definition of this dynamic agent or adequate explanation of its working has been offered.

Not only is the regulation in ontogeny an enigma, but we are still almost completely ignorant of the dynamic relationships in living systems. A considerable body of information is available concerning the physical and chemical structure of protoplasm but we know little of the way in which the elements are organized into a dynamic whole.

A great deal is known about the cytoplasm and nucleus of the cell, but almost nothing is known of why the complex patterns and elements of the cell form as they do. "Here, then, as in embryology, we find 'pattern of organization' the fundamental problem." Study of the nervous systems over a period of years gave Dr. Burr much experimental evidence of cyclic growth patterns "within the wall of the neural tube." He began to wonder why and how these patterns occurred. This is his conclusion:

The pattern or organization of any biological system is established by a complex electro-dynamic field, which is in part determined by its atomic physio-chemical components and which in part determines the behavior and orientation of those components. . . . It must regulate and control living things, it must be the mechanism the outcome of whose activity is "wholeness," organization and continuity. The electro-dynamic field then is comparable to the entelechy of Driesch, the embryonic field of Spemann, the biological field of Weiss. . . .

Life, then, is not a special creation but an expression of fundamental law operating in living and non-living matter alike.

Dr. Northrup "discovered" his macroscopic atomic theory in 1922 "in connection with an analysis of the problem of organization in biology." His chief formulation seems to be in a lengthy article in *The Journal of Philosophy* for August 1928, called: "The Macroscopic Atomic Theory: A Physical Interpretation of the Theory of Relativity." It is worth while for the serious student to read this article. It is a combination of physics, mathematics, and philosophy leading to a very ancient postulate (offered by Dr. Northrup as his own) that the universe is like a giant atom (or cell or being). After an abstruse technical presentation, Dr. Northrup begins to present his theory:

There is in this universe, in addition to the electrons and protons, an entity which the traditional analyses failed to discover. . . . The steps leading to the discovery of this additional object come out very clearly if we begin with the compound field which the theory of relativity

> describes, and note those characteristics in it which the microscopic electrons and protons do not provide. . . . For it follows logically that if the microscopic fields have the properties required to provide the space-time variability, which is the essential point in the general theory of relativity, then they can not possess the properties sufficient to produce the general macroscopic uniformity which is also present.

Dr. Northrup postulates that an actual physical body must exist which surrounds the microscopic fields of the whole universe. This he calls a "Macroscopic physical atom, spherical in shape, hollow in the center except for its inner field, and large enough to contain and congest in its interior all the electrons and protons which constitute nature." A thesis is then advanced:

> The behavior of any compound field or body in nature is determined not merely by the microscopic atoms which it contains, but also by their relation to each other and to all other systems and atoms in nature. Thus the macroscopic atom brings the structure of the whole to bear upon every part. The molar level of nature upon which we live is, consequently, a union or equilibrium of the microscopically small and the macroscopically large.

SPINOZA'S METAPHYSICS

All Bodies and all Minds of endless generations are unbegotten and imperishable ideas in Infinite Thought. Now this consentaneous being of all ideas at once is real, while the succession of generations is an illusion of finite consciousness. And it is this reality, unattainable to mortal thought in some momentary ecstatic glimpse, which the Master has in view when he speaks of Body and Mind "in the aspect of eternity." It is likely enough that this may bring small comfort to those who insist that the everlasting *duration* of finite 'self" is an essential condition of bliss.

—J. ALLANSON PICTON: *Spinoza*

QUESTIONS ON THE GOD-IDEA

WHY do different peoples, and "times," vary so greatly in their concept of Deity—from Fetichism to Immutable Law?

The evolution of the God-Idea proceeds apace with man's own intellectual evolution. So true it is that the noblest ideal to which the religious Spirit of one age can soar, will appear but a gross caricature to the philosophic mind in a succeeding epoch.

Was this the case among men from earliest primitive ages?

The philosophers themselves had to be initiated into perceptive mysteries before they could grasp the correct idea of the ancients in relation to this most metaphysical subject. Otherwise—outside such initiation—for every thinker there will be a "thus far shalt thou go and no farther," mapped out by his intellectual capacity, as clearly and unmistakably as there is for the progress of any nation or race in its cycle by the law of Karma.

Does the law of Karma impose such intellectual limitations?

Mankind is obviously divided into god-informed men and lower human creatures. The intellectual difference between the Aryan and other civilized nations and such savages as the South Sea Islanders, is inexplicable on any other grounds. No amount of culture, nor generations amid civilization, could raise such human specimens as the Bushmen, the Veddhas of Ceylon, and some African tribes, to the same intellectual level as the Aryans, the Semites, and the Turanians so called.

There are existing, then, actual inferior men?

The "sacred spark" is missing in them and it is they who are the only *inferior* races on the globe, now happily—owing to the wise adjustment of nature which ever works in that direction—fast dying out. Verily mankind is "of one blood," *but not of the same essence.* We are hothouse, artificially quickened plants in nature, having in us a spark, which in them is latent.

What of the term "God"? Is it a good one to use?

The attempt to derive God from the Anglo-Saxon synonym "good" is an abandoned idea, for in no other language, in all of which the term varies more or less, from the Persian *Khoda* down to the Latin *Deus*,

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NOTE.—Collated from *The Secret Doctrine* and *Transactions*.

has an instance been found of a name of God being derived from the attribute of Goodness. To the Latin race it comes from the Aryan *Dyaus* (the Day); to the Slavonians, from the Greek Bacchus (*Bagh-bog*); and to the Saxon races directly from the Hebrew *Yodh* or *Jod.* The latter is the number 10, male and female, and *Jod* the phallic hook—hence the Saxon *Godh,* the Germanic *Gott,* and the English God. This symbolic term may be said to represent the Creator of physical "Humanity," on the *terrestrial* plane; but surely it has nothing to do with the formation or "Creation" of Spirit, gods, or Kosmos!

The "God-idea" is then a dual one? A God of the terrestrial, *and a God of the* celestial *"Creation"?*

Pymander, the "Thought Divine" personified, says: "The *Light* is me, I am the Nous (the mind or Manu), I am thy God, and I am far older than the human principle which escapes from the shadow (*"Darkness,"* or the Concealed Deity). I am the germ of thought, the resplendent *Word,* the *Son* of God. All that thus sees and hears in thee is the *Verbum* of the Master, it is the Thought (*Mahat*) which is God, the Father."

Can this be simplified? Here God seems to be synonymous with the term "Manu."

Manu comes from the root *man* "to think," hence "a thinker." It is from this Sanskrit word very likely that sprung the Latin *"mens,"* mind, the Egyptian *"Menes,"* the "Master-Mind," the Pythagorean *Monas,* or conscious *"thinking unit,"* mind also, and even our *Manas* or mind, the fifth principle in man.

But "God" in Pymander *seems also synonymous with Mahat. Can this be related to man?*

"When Mahat develops into the feeling of Self-Consciousness—I—then it assumes the name of Egoism." Translated into our esoteric phraseology, this means when *Mahat* is transformed into the human *Manas* (or even that of the finite gods), it becomes *Aham*-ship, or "I"—Selfhood.

Then the "Thought Divine," or the "Word," Mahat, *is transformed into both* Manas, *which is immortal, and into "that of the finite gods"?*

"God" is the collectivity of all Spiritual Beings. The "Ah-hi" pass through all the planes, beginning to manifest on the third, of the seven

planes. Like all other Hierarchies, on the highest plane they are *arupa,* i.e., formless, bodiless, without any substance, mere breaths. On the second plane, they first approach to Rupa, or form. On the third they become the Manasa-putras (the Sons of *Mahat*), those who become incarnated in man.

With every plane they reach they are called by different names—there is a continual differentiation of their original homogeneous substance; we call it substance, although in reality it is no substance of which we can conceive. Later, they become *Rupa*—ethereal forms.

The text speaks of Planetary, Solar, Lunar, and lastly, Incarnating Egos.

The Endowers of man with his conscious, immortal EGO, are the "Solar Angels"—whether so regarded metaphorically or literally. The mysteries of the Conscious EGO or human soul are great. The esoteric name of these "Solar Angels" is, literally, the "Lords" (*Nath*) of "persevering ceaseless devotion" (*pranidhana*). Therefore they of the *fifth* principle (*Manas*) seem to be connected with, or to have originated the system of the Yogis who make of *pranidhana* their *fifth* observance.

And the other class of "Pitris" . . . ?

The Progenitors of man, called in India "Fathers," Pitara or Pitris, are the creators of our bodies and lower principles. They are ourselves as the *first personalities,* and *we are they.* Primeval man would be "the bone of their bone and the flesh of their flesh"—if they had body and flesh.

Why "primeval man"? Why not the man of today?

The Pitris are not the ancestors of the present living men, but those of the first human kind or Adamic race; the spirits of *human* races, which, on the great scale of descending evolution, preceded our races of men, and were physically as well as spiritually, far superior to our modern pygmies. They are called the *Lunar* ancestors.

Can an illustration be given to help comprehend this statement?

Mankinds different from the present are mentioned in all the ancient Cosmogonies. Plato speaks, in the *Phædrus,* of a "winged race of men." Aristophanes (in Plato's *Banquet*), speaks of a race "androgynous and with round bodies." Again, in the ancient Quiche MSS, the *Popol Vuh,* the first men are described as a race "whose sight was unlimited, and

who knew all things at once": thus showing the *divine knowledge of Gods,* not mortals. *The Secret Doctrine,* correcting unavoidable exaggerations of popular fancy, gives the facts as they are recorded in the Archaic symbols.

Are such Teachings better understood in the Orient?

With the Brahmans the Pitris are very sacred, because they are the Progenitors or ancestors of men—the first *Manushya* on this Earth—and offerings are made to them by the Brahman when a son is born unto him. They are more honoured and their ritual is more important than the worship of the gods . . .

Every old religious tradition points to this dual origin of Man?

Everywhere it is the same. The *creating* powers produce Man, but fail in their final object. All these *logoi* strive to endow man with *conscious* immortal spirit, reflected in the Mind (*Manas*) alone; they fail, and they are all represented as being punished for their failures, if not for the attempt.

They fail, *because . . .?*

Each class of Creators endows man with *what it has to give*: the one builds his external form; the other gives him its essence, which later on becomes the Human *Higher Self* owing to the *personal exertion of the individual.* But they could not make men as they were themselves—perfect, because sinless; sinless, because having only the first, pale shadowy outlines of attributes, and these all perfect—from the human standpoint—white, pure and cold as the virgin snow. Where there is no struggle there is no merit.

What was the "punishment" spoken of?

A sentence of imprisonment in the lower nether region, which is our earth; the lowest in its chain; an "eternity"—meaning the duration of the life-cycle—in the darkness of matter, or *within* animal Man. It has pleased the half-ignorant and half-designing Church Fathers to disfigure the graphic symbol. They took advantage of the metaphor and allegory found in every old religion and turned them to the benefit of the new one. Thus, man was transformed into the darkness of a material hell; his divine consciousness, obtained from his indwelling Principle (the Manasa), or the incarnated Deva, became the glaring flames of the infernal region; and our globe that Hell itself.

What is the right interpretation of the allegory?

Esoteric philosophy teaches that *one third* of the Dhyanis—i.e., the three classes of the *Arupa* Pitris, endowed with intelligence, "which is a formless breath, composed of intellectual not elementary substances" —was doomed by the law of Karma and evolution to be reborn (or re-incarnated) on Earth. Thence, the subsequent assertions of St. John's vision, referred to in his Apocalypse, for example, about "the great red Dragon having seven heads and *ten* horns, and seven crowns upon his heads," whose "tail drew the *third part* of the stars of heaven and did cast them to the earth."

Then one should sharply differentiate between man's "Endowers" and his "Creators"?

The *Kumaras,* explains an esoteric text, "are the Dhyanis, derived immediately from the supreme Principle, who reappear in the Vaivasvata Manu period, for the progress of mankind." They may indeed mark a "special" or extra *creation,* since it is they who, by incarnating themselves within the senseless human shells of the two first Root-races and a great portion of the Third Root-race, create, so to speak, a *new race*: that of thinking, self-conscious and divine man.

It must be admitted, though, that the problem is a complex one. Both classes are Pitris, and both seem to be "Creators"!

Like alone produces like. The Earth gives man his body, the gods (Dhyanis) his five inner principles, the psychic Shadow, of whom those gods are often the animating principle. SPIRIT (Atman) is one—and indiscrete.

Humanity, "of the Earth earthy," was not destined to be created by the angels of the first divine Breath. Therefore they are said to *have refused* to do so, and man had to be formed by more material creators, who, in their turn, could give only what they had in their own natures, and no more. Subservient to eternal law, the pure Gods could only project out of themselves *shadowy* men, a little less ethereal and spiritual, less divine and perfect than themselves—shadows still. The first humanity, therefore, was a pale copy of its progenitors; too material, even in its ethereality, to be a hierarchy of gods; too spiritual and pure to be MEN, endowed as it is with every negative (*Nirguna*) perfection.

The pure celestial Being (Dhyan Chohan) and the great Pitris of various classes were commissioned—the one to evolve their images

(*Chhaya*), and make of them physical man, the others to inform and thus endow him with divine intelligence and the comprehension of the Mysteries of Creation.

Can it be asked why "Spiritual Beings" are "commissioned"?

There is an eternal cyclic law of re-births, and the series is headed at every new Manvantaric dawn by those who had enjoyed their rest from re-incarnations in previous Kalpas for incalculable *Æons*—the highest and earliest Nirvanees. It was the turn of those "Gods" to incarnate in the present Manvantara; hence their presence on Earth, and the ensuing allegories; hence also the perversion of the original meaning. The Gods who had "fallen" into generation, whose mission it was to complete "divine" man, are found represented later on as Demons, evil Spirits, and fiends, at feud and at war with Gods, or the irresponsible agents of the one Eternal law. But no conception of such creatures as the devils and Satan of the Christian, Jewish and Mahometan religions was ever intended under those thousand and one Aryan allegories.

In a sense then, the "Gods" are compelled to "fall into generation"?

We have a passage from a Master's letter which has a direct bearing upon these incarnating angels. Says the letter: "Now there are, and there must be, failures in the ethereal races of the many classes of Dhyan-Chohans, or Devas (*progressed entities of a previous* planetary period), as well as among men. But still, as the *failures* are far too progressed and spiritualized to be thrown back forcibly from Dhyan-Chohanship into the vortex of a new primordial evolution through the lower Kingdoms, this then happens. Where a new solar system has to be evolved these Dhyan-Chohans are born in by influx 'ahead' of the Elementals (Entities . . . to be developed into humanity at a *future* time) and remain as a latent or inactive spiritual force, in the aura of a nascent world . . . until the stage of human evolution is reached. . . . Then they *become an active force* and commingle with the Elementals, to *develop little by little the full type of humanity.*" That is to say, to develop in, and endow man with his Self-conscious mind, or *Manas.*

THEOSOPHY—A GODLESS RELIGION?

> And now I will tell you the cause of nearly two-thirds of the evils that befall humanity, it is Religion, in whatever form and whatever guise. —*A Mahatma Letter*

EVER since Man became Man, that is, since the reasoning faculty was added to the evolving animal that thus became Man, the mind has attempted to learn more of its own nature. The means for acquiring such knowledge are always available, as are also the means for self-deception. In her *Key to Theosophy,* H. P. Blavatsky brings out the distinction between Religion and religions in various ways, all being intended to make the student *think,* rather than believe. This distinction is most important, and it can be shown that Theosophy encourages its students to think, to compare, to analyze, and to accept or reject only after careful consideration. That which the Theosophist accepts and makes part of his own knowledge is his by right of conquest —his conquest of ignorance. Religion, on the other hand, discourages thought and inquiry and demands *belief* in lieu of reason, and, when the innate reasoning powers of Man demand an explanation of the basis of beliefs, the cry of "blasphemy" is usually sufficient to discourage further inquiry except in the more independent minds. Those whose minds refuse to be stifled by such methods in time cease to believe and begin a search for Truth.

The central figure in most of the popular religions is a man-created, superhuman being whose attributes are those which have been presented to him by those who created him—and then worshiped their own creation. Thus the Germans have a god whose name is Gott, and who is a German; the Spaniards have a god called Dios, who is a Spaniard; the Moslems have a Moslem god named Allah; the Jews have their Yahwe or Jehovah, who is Jewish, and so on throughout all the nations and races. And within each religion there are "dissensions and differences of individual opinion" in the form of sub-sectarianism.

The chief difference between Theosophy, as *Wisdom* Religion, and sectarian religions is that Theosophy teaches the reign of universal, immutable, natural Law in the Universe, while each specific religion is based upon some *exception* to natural law, and, within its own area, it multiplies the exceptions for the supposed benefit of its believers. And so we have a God who grants unearned favors to individuals, groups,

and nations, according to their beliefs. Those whose memories reach back to World War I may remember letters from Germany bearing the cancellation legend, *"Gott strafe England";* in the bull fight arenas of certain Latin countries there are chapels where the *toreros* may pray for sins previously committed, and then go forth to engage in torture and killing, while over the fighters' entrance to the arena are the words, *"Maria Amparadme"* (Mary protect me). The ascribing of national or racial characteristics to one's chosen god or gods is such a well-known fact that it has been said that if camels could conceive of a god he would have a humped back.

If one were in search of material with which to break down false ideas in regard to God or Gods, he could easily fill thousands of pages with such material. However, iconoclasm is not the aim, purpose, or teaching of Theosophists. They can, and do, when occasion demands, and according to the degree of their understanding, point out that which is true and that which is false in the two main avenues of human thought, Science and Religion, but in so doing they are aware of the sincerity and devotion among many of the unbigoted followers of these systems of thought, and are motivated by a sincere desire to aid in finding the truth, just as each Theosophist was at one time so aided. And many of them are peculiarly qualified to point out the truth, just because they once believed as others now believe, and learned to pass, each in his own degree, beyond the limitations of thought of church or college and dared to seek and find the truth in proscribed areas of thought.

To the Theosophist there are no "proscribed areas" of thought, although there are many avenues of thought which to him are no longer attractive. Chief of these is the personal god idea—and as an idea it is most persistent. It is here that the beginner in Theosophy finds a great challenge should he dare accept, even as a "proposition," a concept which in the beginning is quite foreign to his previously held notions, as well as to those of most of his friends and relatives. But, to some of those who contact the teachings of Theosophy in the present incarnation the binding chains of conventional religion have already become weakened, and the old knowledge is returning to combat error. Thus, in the abandonment of cherished, but erroneous, ideas there is no sense of guilt or disloyalty for one who forsakes conventional religion to embrace Universal Truth. True, one may, for a time, cling to old ideas

until they are displaced by true ones, and such displacement comes about as the items of the theosophical philosophy are related to each other by the inherent reasonableness which the teachings present. This relationship naturally has a greater appeal to the thinker than either the dicta of sectarian advocates or the insistent formality of popery of all kinds.

One who earnestly desires to *know* will no longer care to "believe." He may be slow to accept new ideas, but all that is asked of a would-be Theosophist is a willingness to consider the teachings as *propositions.* And, unlike the unreasonable statements of many creeds, the teachings of Theosophy appeal because of their reasonableness.

All true expositions of the philosophy of Theosophy have shown the teachings under their dual expressions, the scientific and the religious, or, to use other terms, the practical and the ethical. A "scientific basis for promulgated ethics" should have its appeal to those who prefer knowledge to belief, but there are few who are willing to accept the responsibility which knowledge confers and exacts, while "beliefs" are so comforting. An imbalance between the scientific and the religious predilection invites specialization, and thus other aspects, such as the political, enter into consideration. Thus many of the popular religions might be described as politico-religious systems.

The Ten Commandments, said to have been delivered to Moses, were practical means of enforcing ethical behavior upon the tribes to whom they were addressed. Under the exoteric aspect of these commandments they had a legal basis, such as exists as the basis of most man-made laws, and were thus introduced by the prohibitory clause, "Thou shalt not." Under their esoteric aspect, especially in regard to the first one, only a Theosophist could understand the reason for their existence. Jesus, the reformer, gave two essential commandments, condensing all into these two—"Thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." These are positive, not prohibitory admonitions, and, when understood theosophically, contain all that is most necessary in the way of injunction. Theosophy condenses all wisdom, all religion, into one commandment, "Act for and as the Self, the Self of all creatures."

A cynic was once heard to say, "Patriotism is what makes a dog bark at a stranger; religion is what makes a dog bark at the moon." Such statements might apply to those who have made superstitions of their

patriotism and their religion, that is, the blind believers, but it is not true in regard to those who have knowledge rather than belief. True patriotism, like true religion, cannot be enforced by laws or commandments. If this proposition were to be recognized as a "fact," there would be little need for man-made laws; and the fact that most people do not need the imposition of prohibitions indicates a degree of innate knowledge of *natural* law, rather than respect for man-made laws, or, a recognition that the imposed regulations make some attempt to bring about harmony.

In theosophical expressions, written and oral, much has been said about Universal Brotherhood, and, it is hoped, much more will be repeated, because to learn and carry into thought and action the *purpose* of Universal Brotherhood is the first and only "commandment" of Theosophy. To a student who is reasonably convinced of the *fact* of Universal Brotherhood, such knowledge is more valuable than any amount of acquired knowledge in regard to rounds and races, lost continents, degrees of attainment, the latent psychical powers in man, etc., although all these have their place in the theosophical scheme of things.

And, to those who fear to lose the comfort of belief in a personal god, it is suggested that, discounting pressure from friends, relatives, and clergy, they consider as "propositions" the ideas offered by Theosophy in regard to Deity. After a reasonable period of study, discussion, and analysis they will quite likely discover that not only is Theosophy *not* a godless system of thought, but offers a most intelligent concept of Deity, Man, and the Universe—a concept which by study and practice can lead to emancipation from blind and unreasoned belief and to attainment of a degree of knowledge never available to those who prefer comforting, though irrational, belief to increasing degrees of Soul *Knowledge.*

USELESS READING

Who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep versed in books, and shallow in himself.

—JOHN MILTON

ON THE LOOKOUT

Further Correspondence re H. P. Blavatsky

We are glad to report that the letter from the editors of Theosophy, sent by our New York correspondent to the editors of *Cosmopolitan,* received the following reply, a copy of which was sent on to Theosophy:

Mr. Roderick Townley
175 East Seventeenth Street
New York 21, New York

Dear Mr. Townley:

Madame Blavatsky has been defended in the mails by a number of her disciples and descendants, to whom we shall apologize publicly as soon as space permits.

Meanwhile, we offer you our apologies, and those of writer Arturo Gonzalez, Jr., who tells us, "I was completely taken in by the memoirs of Madame Blavatsky's evil cousin Witte. May I add only that many other Atlantan scholars have fallen into the same trap I did."

Thank you for taking the time to write Cosmopolitan.

The Editors

Some Points for the Future

The foregoing letter provided opportunity for direct communication with the editors of *Cosmopolitan*—an opportunity taken advantage of by the Board of Trustees, The Theosophy Company:

February 13, 1960

Editors, Cosmopolitan
57 St. at Eighth Ave.
New York 19, N.Y.

Gentlemen:

We have at hand from Mr. Roderick Townley a copy of your letter of Feb. 8 to him concerning the uncomplimentary references to H. P. Blavatsky in the January article on "Atlantis" by Arturo Gonzalez, Jr. Mr. Townley had forwarded to you a letter he received from the editors of our monthly publication, Theosophy.

Naturally, we are glad to learn that both you and Mr. Gonzalez now acknowledge that the sources he used were wholly unreliable. This apparently relieves us of the need to continue preparation of a protest procedure we had begun. Our intention was to press for publication of a retraction, and we engaged the services of a Los Angeles firm of attorneys to ensure that our request would not be ignored. We are the

world's largest publishers of the works of Madame Blavatsky, and Gonzalez' derogations of her in the *Cosmopolitan,* unless adequately repudiated, will have some adverse effect upon the distribution of her books.

Our purpose in writing at this time is to suggest strongly that the editorial apology include reference to the fact that the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* account of the life and work of Blavatsky reveals an entirely different—and presumably accurate—picture of her. This authoritative condensation was prepared by William Kingsland, whose book, *The Real H. P. Blavatsky* (John M. Watkins, 1928), specifically refutes the slanders repeated by Mr. Gonzalez. Thorough refutation is also provided in the book *The Theosophical Movement,* published in 1925 by E. P. Dutton & Company. We believe that these sources should be mentioned, and Kingsland's piece in the *Britannica,* which runs some 700 words, might be quoted or reproduced.

There is minor irony in the fact that a recent (London, 1959) volume on Madame Blavatsky, John Symonds' *Madame Blavatsky—Medium and Magician,* while deliberately flamboyant, accepts none of the allegations carelessly repeated by Mr. Gonzalez. The point is that even the pot-boiler sort of book on Madame Blavatsky now avoids the perpetuation of slanders against her.

Finally, we may express appreciation that none of the correspondence from your office which we have seen thus far has descended to evasion. And it seems evident that you have looked into the matter sufficiently to determine that a retraction is in order. Our hope is to provide some acceptable suggestions concerning the content of the retraction.

Very truly yours,
Board of Trustees, THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

1959—A BLAVATSKY YEAR?

A thumb-nail sketch of Madame Blavatsky's life, found in the *Lutheran Standard,* Nov. 28, 1959, collects several of the more or less derogatory allusions to her. The question was asked: "What do you think of 'The Theosophical Society' organized in New York in 1875 by Madame Blavatsky?" The reply follows, and may be regarded as typical of the sort of negative reaction to Theosophy which is based upon official denunciations of the past—but which, simply because it is stylized, carries no particular feeling:

I never had any direct dealings with this peculiar cult. I am receiving all my information from *Heresies Exposed,* by William C. Irvine, and *Lutheran Cyclopedia.* . . . As these two authorities agree in every essential detail, I cannot do otherwise than denounce this society, which

teaches a pagan philosophy directly contrary to Christianity, and warn against it in no uncertain terms.

Who was this Madame Blavatsky? She was born in Russia in 1831. She studied spiritism and the occult and cabalistic literature of India and became a spiritualistic medium. . . . For years Madame Blavatsky led " a regular bohemian life"—free and easy, gypsy style. She was married twice. . . . She claimed to have miraculous power and that God at times spoke to her in visions. This woman was the chief founder of the Theosophical Society that claims to teach the divine wisdom that "lies behind all religions alike." Is it possible that God would use such a person to reveal to humanity the hidden secrets of divine truth?

Good Ideas Always Sound That Way

But since the writer in the *Lutheran Standard,* despite his "official" position, is an honest man, his following description of Theosophical teachings can hardly fail to advertise the natural logic of these ideas. Which serves to again demonstrate that a modern Christian's identification with the authorities of his particular denomination may lessen; Theosophical students would hardly regret a great number of such descriptions as those provided in these paragraphs:

Theosophy is pantheistic. It rejects a personal God. It believes that God is made up of everything. Theosophy has no divine Savior, no atonement, no forgiveness of sins; in fact, it denies all the fundamental truths of the Christian religion.

Theosophy teaches reincarnation (that the souls of men will reappear in a different kind of body and thus relive, and again and again relive, a span of life in this world). . . . Theosophy confines reincarnation to the human race. That is, a human soul will always reappear here as another human being and not perchance as an animal or reptile.

Theosophy denies the existence of a heaven or a hell. Human souls, it claims, have been transmigrating for ages, and whatever happiness or sorrow and misfortune an individual has is the unalterable recompense for good or evil in former incarnations. And whatever good or evil one does now in the present life will result in joy or sorrow in future existences.

A Unitarian Speaks on "Easter"

Writing in the *Unitarian Register* for March, 1959, Jack Mendelsohn, Jr. answers those who ask what is left if we subtract the resurrection story from Easter, as follows:

We have left the annual miracle of the Spring, the lengthening days, the awakening earth, the bursting leafbuds, the germinating

seeds—all wonderful, undeniable, and typical of life in its tangible and intangible dimensions.

We have left the spiritual core of the modern Jewish Passover—family solidarity and bonds of social union.

We have left the commemoration of man's dependence on Nature, coupled with his spiritual independence from it.

We have left a surging respect for Jesus, and for all those, known and unknown, who are willing to give their own lives that all life may become more wondrously gentle and good.

We have left a renewed faith that spirit is supreme even in a world so overcome with the glamour of material concerns.

EASTER'S MESSAGE

Mr. Mendelsohn suggests that the message of Easter is best expressed by "a renewed desire to open our hearts to the virtues of sympathy, kindness, and love." He continues:

> Easter, like Passover, is a celebration of the abundant life for all. We say that Easter is a religious festival, and so indeed it may be, but not because it involves rituals and sacraments. Easter is religious if it is a remembrance of the natural joys of living. It is religious if it encourages us to break the chains of self-pity, self-condemnation, self-depreciation, and move outward toward the good we may do in this world. It is religious if it inspires us to survey and re-evaluate all the doings of practical life, to certify their claims upon our energies, to measure the spiritual content they are capable of absorbing. Easter is religious if it reminds us of the inspiration of self-discipline and of the ways in which our individual and partial efforts blend into the all-embracing activities of the human family. It is religious if it helps us to re-unite in coherent wholeness our gifts for thinking and feeling and willing.

"GHOSTIES AND GHOULIES"

It is always a good story when a ghost does a little flirting with an amazed scientist. The Oakland *Tribune,* Dec. 15, 1959, rewrites a UPI report from London:

> A distinguished scientist saw upon the stair a little man who couldn't possibly have been there because he was a ghost. And the distinguished scientist didn't believe in ghosts. Absolutely. Positively. Definitely. But no matter how he tried to rationalize it, there was the little man upon the stair.
>
> He was about 5 feet three, heavy-set and he was odd, even for a ghost. His body seemed to be composed of luminous ribbons with a mass of them wrapped around his head like a shawl. Yet although he

was incandescent, he did not light up even the darkest part of the staircase.

The scientist noticed this much before he decided that since there were absolutely, positively and definitely no ghosts he had probably seen nothing at all. But the next night, there was the little luminous man again, plodding heavily up the stairs ahead of him.

This happened several more times but the scientist still said nothing at all to his wife. Until one night going upstairs to bed first she saw the luminous man just ahead of her. She uttered an exclamation and the figure looked around. She noticed deep-set eyes and that, although the feet were not touching the steps, his knees were bending as though it required an effort for him to ascend. . . . The wife . . . said her husband has made every effort to find a normal explanation for the figure but finally had to admit he could find none.

Poltergeist Phenomena

The Sacramento *Union,* Feb. 7, in commenting on *The Haunted Mind,* by Dr. Nandor Fodor, director of the International Institution for Psychical Research in London, confines its emphasis to poltergeist phenomena. The *Union* quotes Dr. Fodor:

> The belief is that, in order to make contact with objects, such as dishes or knickknacks, and project its "spirit" energies, the entity must work through a living person—a medium. Since many of these cases (although not all) have centered about young boys and girls, it has been suggested that adolescents are in a particularly vulnerable or "sensitive" state.
>
> Since poltergeist phenomena are usually associated with a boy or girl at the pubertal age, it is widely assumed that a side-tracking of the sexual energies in a maturing body may be responsible for the explosive manifestation. The why and how of this psycho-biological disorder is as yet unknown. . . .
>
> My experiences have shown that there are many events—usually at the beginning of the outbreaks—which are extremely hard to explain by completely normal physical laws.

Dr. Fodor also, says the *Union,* "has evolved a 'poltergeist psychosis' which he calls 'an episodic mental disturbance of schizophrenic character'." (We hope Dr. Fodor means *theory* of poltergeist psychosis, for he seems a useful man, and shouldn't end up by being haunted himself!) But the thought here is provocative and suggests correlation between mediumship and unbalance.

Emotional Field

In another report by the UPI, Feb. 2, Dr. Fodor reveals some fasci-

nating and significant details about house-haunting. Again the implication is that *only* the uncontrolled, disturbed, or psychotic person will attract the ordinary sort of poltergeists—or ghosties or ghoulies, either:

> Dr. Fodor said houses with a history of happy occupants have little chance of becoming haunted. The haunted houses he's seen reportedly soaked up unpleasantness of former occupants.
>
> The emotional energy spent during the arguments comes to life, he said, when the later occupants of a haunted house also have emotional upsets. He explained that the two energies—from the past and the present—somehow merge and the haunting takes place. There are no ghosts in white sheets trailing chains. But there is banging of doors for no explained reason, knocking that's mysterious, and sudden cold drafts.
>
> If one unhappy family moves from such a house and a happy family takes up occupancy, the haunting usually disappears, Dr. Fodor said. He explained that the haunting reserve of a haunted house can only be spent when there is emotional instability.

THEOSOPHICAL EXPLANATION

Students of Theosophy sometimes ask why it is that we hear so much of "bad" influences and so little of "good" ones from the astral plane, why it is that the "restless" or evil shells materialize rather than "beneficent" ones. We quote from the pamphlet, *States after Death*:

> Materialization of a form out of the air, independent of the medium's physical body, is a fact. But it is not a spirit. Theosophy offers three explanations of these appearances: *First,* that the astral body of the living medium detaches itself from the physical and assumes the appearance of the so-called "spirit"; for one of the properties of the astral matter is the capacity to reflect an image existing unseen in ether. *Second,* the actual astral shell of the deceased—wholly devoid of his or her spirit and conscience—becomes visible and tangible when the condition or air and ether is such as to so alter the vibration of the molecules of the astral that it may become visible. The phenomena of density and apparent weight are explained by other laws. *Third,* an unseen mass of electrical matter is collected, and upon it is reflected out of the astral light a picture of any desired person either living or dead. . . .
>
> The coherence of the shells that visit mediums is in general determined by the degree of materiality of the deceased and the time that has elapsed since the death of the physical body. A good and spiritualized person leaves a shell that will soon disintegrate. Very rarely, if ever, can the shells of the pure and good be made to manifest themselves at a séance, so feeble and ephemeral are these remains. A gross, mean, selfish and materialistic person's shell will be heavy, coherent, and

long-lived. . . . They are galvanized for a moment by the astral currents of the medium and of those persons who were related to the deceased. (*States After Death,* pp. 20, 21.)

ESP not Abnormal

An intelligent way of looking at the field of parapsychological study appears in Dr. Spencer Thornton's column in the San Francisco *Examiner,* Nov. 1:

> Last week I lunched in Washington, D.C., with several leading executives. One of them happened to mention a dream he'd had which later "came true." It was clearly a case of precognition (seeing something before it happens). Before you could say "E.S.P.," half the men at the table were chipping in with similar incidents that had happened to them. And each one seemed surprised—and delighted—to discover that such things do happen to others besides himself.
>
> I, too, was delighted, but for other reasons. For the session was evidence of two things I had discovered some time ago. Namely, that such instances of extrasensory perception do not happen only to mystics and members of the so-called occult groups, but also turn upon the lives of ordinary people. And second, that these ordinary people are beginning to accept the fact that E.S.P. may very well be part of their lives. . . .

Changing Status of Psychic Phenomena

Dr. Thornton notes that the recent respectability of psychic phenomena is due in large part to the work of such investigators as J. B. Rhine, Karlis Osis, and Gardner Murphy, in the United States, of S. G. Soal, of London, and Carlo Marchesi, of Yugoslavia. These are among the men who "have been collecting data, conducting experiments, and issuing information on a scientific—rather than 'sensational'—level," with the result that a great many people, "somewhat above average intelligence," accept the discussion of ESP as a "respectable hobby." They have discovered that—

> Incidents are not as uncommon as we once believed, nor does there seem to be anything supernatural, certainly nothing to be feared, in E.S.P. On the contrary, it has seemed to be the natural product of the spontaneous sharing of mutual thoughts and experiences.
>
> In other words, we are coming out of the "dark ages" in our attitude toward these mysteries of the mind.

In the context of such thinking, one would hope to find many minds hospitable to theosophical interpretation of mental and psychic phenomena.

MIND OVER MATTER

Curious, but arresting, evidence of the primacy of mind over all conditions of body chemistry is provided in the Pasadena *Independent,* Oct. 26:

> While a veteran schizophrenic was hearing voices which didn't exist and seeing things which weren't there, his circulating blood was hooked up with the circulating blood of a man who was mentally normal.
>
> The schizophrenic man and the normal man exchanged their blood for six hours in the interest of science. It was a test of the widely held idea that there is something in the body chemistry of the schizophrenic which keeps feeding a toxic substance into his blood. This toxic substance may be related to his disease.
>
> If the infusion of schizophrenic blood had caused the sane man to have hallucinations and delusions, or if the infusion of normal blood had stopped the hallucinations and delusions, the result might have given some support to the "toxic substance" theory.
>
> But the opposite happened. The sane man, in the hours immediately following the experiment, seemed to become even saner. The hallucinations and delusions of the schizophrenic became more deeply established. These theoretically puzzling results were reported by six scientists to the American Psychiatric Association.

THE MOON AND THE TIDES

A vivid account of "Secrets of the Restless Tides," by C. P. Idyll, of the University of Miami's department of marine sciences, appears in *Think* for November. Several paragraphs seem interesting in the light of Theosophic teachings:

> Nearly everyone knows that the moon somehow controls the tides, but many fail to realize that the sun, too, brings its influence very much to bear on daily tidal movements.
>
> But then, if the moon and the sun shine over the whole world, why are the tides in Funday 50-plus feet in range while those in many Pacific islands measure a few inches? Why, again, do most of the coasts of the Atlantic Ocean have two well-marked high tides a day while many areas along the Gulf of Mexico have only one? Why do most tides march along later every day by about 50 minutes while those of Tahiti are so unvarying that popular belief says you can almost set your watch by their steady pulse? . . .
>
> To understand fully why water on the surface of the earth moves in response to the attractive force of the moon, we have to realize that *each particle* in the adjacent objects feels the pull of gravity. Hence,

every molecule of the earth is pulled as if by invisible wires toward the moon. Particles of rock, of grass and of you and me come under this influence to the same extent as particles of water, but none of these is as free to react to the moon's pull, so the result of this force is evident only in the sea.

Tides Considered from Different Points of View

Dr. Idyll explains why some tides are higher than others (effect of full moon, new moon, high winds, etc.), and also the difference between tidal wave and tidal bore. The bore is a "front of water created when a tide in a narrow channel and with a big range is checked in its flooding by a sand bar or similar obstruction." "Tidal wave," he says, "is a misnomer for a phenomenon caused by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions." Dr. Idyll continues:

> It is often stated, sometimes jestingly, sometimes in all seriousness, that the moon drives men to madness. "Madness" has never been identified in sea animals, but something akin to it is caused by moon-dominated tides. People living on the seaside in Southern California, for example, marvel at the precisely-timed, frantically conducted spawning run of the grunion, the small silvery fish which regulates its egg-laying to coincide precisely with the spring tides of certain times of the year. . . .
>
> A host of other marine creatures have a rhythm timed to the sea's movements. Such fixed animals as barnacles, oysters and mussels, which are periodically exposed on the flats, wait for the tides to bring them their food, and their activity is timed to the tides' oscillation. . . .
>
> The tides can be considered from many points of interest. We may look at them with the eye of the engineer, envisioning thousands of horsepower energy. We may have the uncomplicated viewpoint of the seaside dweller, who times his activities to the tidal cycles, or the inquisitive outlook of the biologist who studies the influence of the restless waters on sea creatures. Whatever our interest, we cannot but marvel at their timing and their *lifelike breathing motion.* (Italics ours.)

A "Fundamental Proposition"

When the Theosophical student encounters such observations, he is able to appreciate the brevity of H. P. Blavatsky's statement of the Second Fundamental Proposition in *The Secret Doctrine.* Her basic intent, as indicated by the phrasing, is to invite reflection upon the many instances of "cycles" in nature from the standpoint of universal periodicity:

The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically "the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing," called "the manifesting stars," and the "sparks of Eternity." "The Eternity of the Pilgrim" is like a wink of the Eye of Self-Existence. "The appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb of flux and reflux."

This second assertion of the Secret Doctrine is the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature. An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so common, so perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe.

RENEWED OPPOSITION TO LOYALTY OATH

Opposition to the loyalty oath, instead of simmering down, has become even more determined in certain quarters. For instance, from the Los Angeles *Times* of Nov. 18 we learn that—

Yale and Harvard teamed up last night to withdraw from the federal student loan program as a protest over the loyalty affidavit it requires. The action by the two universities meant their relinquishing almost half a million dollars in funds available to them from the federal government as loans to needy students.

Yale President A. Whitney Griswold said his university would make no further commitments for loans under the National Defense Act of 1958 as long as the "negative affidavit" is required in addition to the oath of support for the U.S. Constitution.

Harvard President Nathan M. Pusey, who said the university was relinquishing $357,873 in federal funds, described the "affidavit of disbelief" as "misguided."

The affidavit requires a student applying for a loan to swear that he does not believe in, belong to, or support "any organization that believes in or teaches the overthrow of the United States government by force or violence or by any illegal or unconstitutional methods."

A REQUEST

Once again, we urge those sending clippings to this department to be sure the name of the source is on each item. Further, we would suggest that clippings, especially from newspapers, be sent in not later than the end of the month in which they were printed.

THE UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS

DECLARATION

The policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great Founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable basis for union among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "similarity of aim, purpose and teaching," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that basis. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect; yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signatures will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with. Write to:

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